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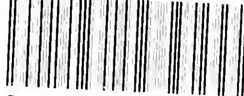
Remarks suggested by President Garfield's death.

By N. F. Davin.



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REMARKS SUGGESTED

BY

PRESIDENT GARFIELD'S DEATH

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N. F. DAVIN.

OTTAWA:

J. DURIE & SON.
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To His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir John Douglas Sutherland Campbell, K.T., G.C.M.G., P.C., Marquis of Lorne, Governor General of Canada.

My Lord,—The reason why I desired the honour of dedicating this small pamphlet to Your Excellency, will be found in the simplicity and manliness of your character in which, as well as in the stainless example of your private life, and the fruitful blending of literary culture with political activity, there are points of resemblance to the late President of the United States.

The reason I republish a fugitive magazine article is this: the subject not only gave me an opportunity of stating the grounds on which, in a free country, a man should act with a party and why he should regard fidelity to his party as rendered imperative by honour and patriotism, but—such was the breath of interest attaching to the President's demise—also of rebuking those English literary men who in depreciating Canada are disloyal to England, and who humiliate every man in the Empire by their constant scribbling of peddling treason. And in this connexion, my Lord, I cannot forbear to express for my part the delight with which the people of Canada have watched Your Excellency develope into a thorough Canadian. The rapid

progress made by Canada shows of what stuff the old and middle aged are made; and no one who knows the young men of this great nation in embryo can doubt that the possibilities of the future, however splendid, may safely be committed to their hands.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

N. F. DAVIN.

OTTAWA, December 5th, 1881.

REMARKS SUGGESTED BY PRESIDENT GARFIELD'S DEATH.

ON the death of the late President of the United States, all has been said that grief and sympathy could desire; but much that should be said could find no place in condolences and threnodies. The printing press and the telegraph have given to the doctrine of human brotherhood a deeper significance, as well as the means of practical expression. A Greek historian put in the mouth of an Athenian statesman the fine hyperbole: that of dead men, who living were great, the whole earth is the mausoleum. To-day, what was a flight of rhetoric in the time of Thucydides, the newsboy makes almost a literal fact. A few years ago Charles Kingsley, when lecturing in Toronto, advised the young men of Canada to aspire to Westminster Abbey. It would seem that an ambition for funeral pomp may be realized without sending the hearse across the Atlantic; and for the fond hope of being remembered by our race, not pyramid, nor temple, nor column, nor the breathing marble, but the heart and memory of humanity are the enduring shrines of the benefactors of mankind, and these are monuments which are circumscribed to no spot, belong to no one hemisphere, nor do their doors open and close at the bidding of interest or power. It is true, a man may write his name indelibly on this earth in the blood of his fellows, but the time is at hand when men will neither honour nor covet the renown of a destroyer. High gifts, even when they do not bear the hallmark of the immortals, if conscientiously used, may henceforth look for recognition in the esteem of good men wherever civilization reaches, and this is the only element in an apotheosis a really great man would value. The spectacle, if the word may be used, of

nations—not merely rulers, but the peoples of the earth—crowding as mourners round Mr. Garfield's coffin, without escutcheon or crest, was well calculated to move and fill the imagination. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted by writers, who in grief or joy must beat what Lord Salisbury calls the 'Tom-tom of Free Trade.' So far as it had any bearing on the future of international politics, not increased friendliness between any two nations, except as an incidental result, was portended, but the advent of a democratic consciousness in which social ideas will count for as much as political, and which, finding nothing to feed its enthusiasm in the past, will inevitably turn to the future and unknown.

It is, of course, possible to overestimate the importance of such a wave of emotion, and the reaction has already set in. It may be said that the cosmopolitan consensus of sorrow yields to analysis only a commonplace scientific fact: the annihilation of space by the telegraph, which placed the residents of London or Melbourne in the same position, as to knowledge of the President's sufferings, as the inhabitants of Washington. Had he been the humblest labourer, or a soldier who had done nothing, but for forcing an account of whose sufferings on public attention an excuse could have been found, there would, when death arrived, have been world-wide sorrow; but in nature and depth, it would have been very different from that we are discussing. That Garfield had a mission; that he had been a poor struggling lad; that he had gained the position of a great potentate; that he was a politician guided by principle and honour; that his ideal of the political character was high; that his ambition was not to gather a little fussy importance to himself but to serve his country so that she would be better because duty had called him from the attractive seclusion of his study into the turbulent arena of party stife; all this, vaguely in

some instances, more defined in others, was present to the mind, and, while mighty interests seemed to hang upon his fate, brought him near the hearts of men. From daily reading of his sufferings, pathetic associations clustered every morning more thickly and closely around his name, and the fountains of feeling flowed as by habit of sympathy at its sound. 'We felt,' said a poor gardener, 'almost as if he had been one of ourselves.'

On such a theme as the present, perhaps one ought to be above a sneer at human generosity, the eager desire—the pen hesitates to write the noble desire—to do full justice to the claims of one who can no longer compete with us. When a man achieves supreme power, he is in a sense as much removed from conditions which excite envy as if he were dead. Fear, hope, hatred, love, admiration, loyalty, such are the sentiments men entertain to their rulers or leaders ; and when one who has attained to this height is struck down, pity and imagination are unrestrained. The mind fills up a broken career with great deeds, and finds a pleasure in doing this, because they are no longer within anybody's reach. So different are the feelings with which we contemplate the deeds of the living and the dreams of what the dead would have done. Had the young Marcellus lived, Virgil might have lampooned him.

When we pass away from the personal to the national aspect of the tragedy, we think that the achievements which would have brought Garfield honour would have conferred blessings on a country in which, as in our own, the hopes of the world are largely bound up. Since the war, most people would give a policy on its life. Even those who look on it with far other regards than are cherished by the unprivileged children of poverty, feel that it is best for the world that its government should be honest and enlightened. The Queen, in sending a floral wreath to

Mrs. Garfield, did an act the beauty of which no vulgar analysis can mar. We may be sure she was only thinking of doing something graceful, womanly, kind, and that there were no mercenary calculations in the motives which presented themselves to her mind, when the woman bent over a sister, prostrated by a grief she could well understand, and the ruler expressed an Empire's sympathy. In an article entitled 'England and America over the President's grave,' the editor of the *Contemporary Review* reminds one of a gossip at a wake shedding copious tears, and expressing a hope that the bereaved, with whom she has not been on good terms, will henceforth buy their groceries at her shop. This apostle of humanity demands special room in the funeral procession for England, as represented by the Queen, in order to appeal to the people of the United States, over the open grave of their ruler, and in the midst of their sorrow—to do what ?—the reader will not believe it—to open their ports to the English manufacturer. This is to be accomplished by 'the logic of emotion,' and the barriers which have withstood the assaults of great economists are to fall before the tear-vial and red eyes of the editor of the *Contemporary Review !* The 'prejudices' of the commercially unregenerate people of the United States 'have shown themsteel proof against the exactest reasoning.' That this hardness of conviction is due to the heart rather than the head is evident, because 'it has been proved to us in quite a variety of ways long since that Yankee wits are not really suffering any dulness.' He despairs of syllogisms, however neatly constructed ; 'but for ourselves,' he says, 'we are not wholly without faith that they may in the end fall in quite another manner.' And this is the way they are to fall :

'But the key-note meant to be sounded in this paper utterly forbids the making of any *ad misericordiam* appeal. The only way in which we could here reason from merely English grounds would be to try and convict the States of *shabbiness*—if such a word may be allowed—in respect of our grievances. Nor do we think it would be difficult to do that *if only our*

transatlantic brethren were in the right emotional mood for listening. We claim for our own country that she, a small island in the corners of the seas, has really adopted the cosmopolitan ideal of universal intercourse and free exchange, the propagation of which fitly should devolve, as a first duty, upon the gigantic mistress of the New World. * * * *Is it quite worthy of big America to show this fear of little England's industrial competition, meantime sending us not only wheat by millions of bushels, pork by the ship-load, and other things in corresponding quantities, down even to machine-made horse-shoe nails, reckoned by hundreds of tons: the latter, perhaps, as a charm on her own part against her fright becoming a panic. This shall be considered "cuteness" if our big and timorous cousins so wish, and we will be sympathetic with them over it, for are we not in the present article avowedly relying on the logic of emotion?'*

It is hard to express oneself in terms sufficiently restrained of such writing as this. Scorn and mirth are alike stirred. The humour of that allusion to the horse-shoe nails is of the finest sort, and even the seriousness is irresistibly comic when one remembers who those are whose commercial affairs are to be revolutionized by a little maudlin gush. But the matter is too grave for laughter, for the *Contemporary Review*, to which the editor seldom contributes, has a position in English periodical literature; and, therefore, one cannot pass by with the contempt it deserves a sickening preachment insulting to the affliction of the United States and a desecration of the noble grief of the English nation. We are sorry, cries this politico-economic Werther, sorry for your great loss. Observe our emotion, but pray observe how much pork you send us, and that you are shabby enough to put duties on goods you import from England. No logic would convince you you are wrong. Your intellect is bright enough. Yet you will persist in believing that if we send you what manufactures you want you will not require to manufacture yourself. You are a big nation and England is a little one It is all a mistake to suppose that England is a mighty empire. I, and such as I, have found out her pettiness. Don't you see how shabby you are in your dealings with such a little country? Behold those tears for your dead President, and remember you send us pork by the ship-load!

Is there no man in England who has inherited Chatham's faith in her destiny to rebuke writers of this class? Her great poet said she was never to lie at the foot of a proud conqueror. These grovellers would make her bury her forehead in the dust before a few million customers. They may spare their tears. If they think to impress shrewd Yankees with 'the logic of emotion' they will find they have to deal with men who do not believe in whimpering anywhere, but above all in matters of business; who, however, we may be sure, have no objection to see degenerate Englishmen crouching at their feet, but it won't move them, as they say, 'worth a cent.' There is no attitude in the world so sure to get more kicks than half-pence from the Ministers at Washington. The editor of the *Contemporary Review* is well known not to be a very hard-headed person, and, notwithstanding the position of the magazine, he would not be worth noticing were it not that similar Uriah-Heapisms have appeared in the London papers, weekly and daily. It is almost pathetic in its imbecility—the desire to 'produce a favourable impression' on all parts of the Republic, as though this favourable impression would have some practical result, or the English Empire was at the mercy of, or had cause to fear, any nation however powerful. The salute of the English flag ordered by President Arthur is said to have touched the English nation very deeply; but the way it was received in certain quarters proves that among the fifty millions there are Anglo-phobists, besides Fenians, and that underbred rudeness will find rails to carry it far in commercial jealousy and ambition. It was not by the logic of emotion that England became great. Neither a nation nor an individual can hold a position of eminence except by right of superior strength. Hanging on by the skin of the teeth is an easy process compared with hanging on by the sufferance of human charity; but staying oneself on the 'favourable impressions' of a commercial rival, and that rival Brother

Jonathan, is a triumph of self-mockery which has never been surpassed since the soldier who sat on the point of his bayonet because he said he liked a soft thing. Mr. Froude going outside his own country to plead her cause at the bar of the public opinion of another nation, and driven from his 'mission' by the Irish servant-maids of Boston, was sufficiently undignified. But he is outdone by this trafficker in tears, this international bagman who welcomes humiliation provided he can take an order. Not one word from these gentlemen about Canada, except to misrepresent and contemn her. While the States contained but a few millions no such language was held; and men of the same class, who deigned to speculate on her future, cast her horoscope with a sneer. But to-morrow, as time goes with a nation, Canada will be fifty millions. If what such men as Mr. William Clarke desired, namely annexation, took place, what would the trade of England with this Continent be worth? English exports hither would at once fall to the extent of all those articles which Canada imports from England, and the like of which are manufactured in the United States, whose merchant marine would be reinforced by that which is now the fourth in the world, and whose population would be swelled by five millions who would then have every reason to hate a country which had been at once feeble and false. These men, I know, do not speak for England. There is no sign of her decay. But her people and leaders cannot too narrowly watch the influences which make and modify national character. Her burden of Empire, easy for self-denial, for such men as raised the name of England above that of Rome is

> 'heavy to carry
> For hands overflowing with gold.'

Naturally the grief within the Republic was greater than among other nations, however sympathetic. An English friend, who has travelled much in the United States, tells

me that on first making the acquaintance of its people he thought there were only two things for which they had any reverence—a dollar and a lord; but that after more intimacy he saw they also reverenced their President. He adds that, to-day, we are face to face with this dual paradox: in Europe, kings without loyalty; on this continent, loyalty without kings. The moment a man is elected President he receives, though the head of a party, a genuine homage even from those in the ranks of his enemies. Peculiar circumstances inspired towards Garfield feelings of a deeper and more special character than those with which a President is ordinarily regarded. The people of all grades felt that great dangers threatened the State, and that they had found the captain to weather the ship through the storm. Kings and aristocracies have been properly branded for making men admirals and generals who knew nothing of seamanship or war. After hundreds of lives and millions of money had been lost, and the honour of the country tarnished, the king or his mistress would be gracious enough to allow the appointment of ability. A shrewd observer, writing to a man of genius and character who had just become Prime Minister of England, while congratulating him, said his being entrusted with the formation of a Government was a proof of the miserable state of the country; for if it was possible to go on without integrity and ability they would never be thought of. If any one supposes the virus of the Spoils System has made its appearance within recent years, he is very ignorant of the history of the United States: nor is Mr. William Clarke, who writes about affairs on this continent with all the dogmatism of studious and erudite ignorance, right in his contention that Aaron Burr was the dark spirit who introduced corruption. Aaron Burr, himself, was a fruit of the system, and the conscienceless profligate, whose chief object was to destroy the free play of healthy public opinion by

skill in manipulating organizations, has never since been without a representative in the counsels of both parties. But a large number of circumstances connected with President Grant's administration excited alarm, and when a determination to force a third term was manifested alarm deepened into terror. The evils of the Spoils System, of the rule of the 'bosses,' of the thimble-rigging of the managers, were fully realized, and perhaps some shame was felt that no better type of man could be had in the whole fifty millions, than such as after, and some time before Lincoln's presidency, had filled the Presidential chair. When Garfield was nominated, it was felt that a man wholly different from the typical American statesmen had been found; and when, on becoming President, he broke with Conkling the contrast was made more striking.

The breach with Conkling was a proof of his courage and sincerity. It is doubtful whether it was wise or even justifiable. But this is a point which must be deferred for the moment.

Garfield belonged to that class of great men whose greatness cannot be separated from their personality—the breadth, charm and magnetism of their character; nor is it likely that twenty years hence anything he has spoken or written will ever be referred to. His military genius was not of a high order. He was a highly educated man, but the conditions under which he studied made it impossible that he could be a great scholar. His mastery over the English language was considerable, but by no means extraordinary. A life's devotion is the price which must be paid for greatness as a lawyer, and that price was not within Garfield's power. But in whatever he did we see sincerity, the fire of noble purpose, great fertility of resource, fearlessness, and a leader-like tone. All this, combined with truthfulness and a cap-

acity for inspiring attachment in the hearts of good men, mark him as the possessor of some of the choicest elements of greatness.

His life gives countenance to the theory that 'great men are the sons of great mothers.' The theory is fallacious, men inheriting ability from the father as often as from the mother, and the mothers of some great men having no more in common with their sons than the earth has with the rose it has nourished in its womb, or the cloud with the bolt which bursts from its heart of mist, and lights up the landscape with beauty and terror, and carries ruin where it strikes. But the theory flatters the modern worship of women which is specially strong in generous hearts, and, therefore, adds to the interest with which we follow a career whose distinction can be traced to a source so tender. Garfield's mother is undoubtedly a woman of a noble fibre. Her face has aristocratic features, with all the will and energy which made her, when necessary, a rail splitter. She came of a French stock, and the French brightness, clearness of resolve, and the beautiful French gaiety lit up the valuable but less fiery qualities her son derived from his father's family. The sentiment of woman worship is also appealed to by the need he experienced, in common with so many forceful natures of female sympathy, and the happy relations which existed between him and his wife. Of Miss Booth, whose influence on him seems to have been of the happiest description, he says: 'I never met the man whose mind I feared to grapple with; but this woman could lead where I found it hard to follow.' A lady who was a fellow student with him at Hiram College describes him as 'repeating poetry by the hour.' 'He is,' she added, she having kept up her acquaintance with him after college days were over, 'a man who, in the belief of any one who ever knew him, could not be corrupted, and who considers his honour above

his life.' 'I formed an intimate acquaintance with him,' says the Rev. T. Brooks, 'and admired his genial, manly and pleasant ways.' He is described as witty and quick at repartee.

When he became president of the college of which he had once swept the floor, he was sympathetic, full of kindness, yet a most stout disciplinarian, who 'enforced the rules like a martinet.' He was one of the most practical of men, though his Tennyson was as often as possible in his hands. His strong literary turn appealed to the imagination of the people of the United States, among whom education has made sufficient progress to enable them to realize that there is nothing antagonistic between culture and practical ability. Perhaps they had had enough of statesmen of defective education. It is, however, a popular fallacy which is not yet dead, that your practical man is best if he is ignorant —above all if he has no sympathy with poetry—and if his gifts are as far as possible from genius. The truth, however, is there is a close relation between literary capacity and practical power in all matters requiring thought—as, for instance, statesmanship or war, or the higher walks of commerce. Both Lord Beaconsfield and Canning were men of business power; the one was a poet and novelist, the other a poet and journalist. David, whose name is one of the greatest in Jewish history, was a poet as well as a warrior and statesman; Moses, a poet as well as a lawgiver and leader. The greatest among the Greek poets were soldiers: Æschylus drinking in the fiery light of battle on the fields of Marathon and Platæa, and across the victorious waves of Salamis, Sophocles commanding a division in the Samian war.

> With frowning brow o'er Pontiff kings elate
> Stood Dante, great the man, the poet great:

an eager Florentine politician, the reputation of the author of the 'Divine Comedy' overtops the renown of the diplo-

matist and statesman. Chaucer, the father of English song, was a successful soldier, ambassador, and minister. Petrarch was an eager politician. In Milton's case the reputation of Cromwell's secretary and adviser is lost in the glory flooding the head of the author of 'Paradise Lost.' Alexander the Great was a man of enthusiastic literary taste. Cæsar, the greatest of captains, a politician and statesman, was, after Cicero, the first literary man in Rome ; nor can he be seen in a more beautiful and heroic light than reading, writing, and making extracts in his carriage on his long journeys from battlefield to battlefield. The hard Frederick the Great composed verses in the intervals of battles. The political wisdom of Burke is proverbial ; yet he is, before all things, a poet, though writing in prose. The mind of the most successful and practical of all our own statesmen is saturated with English song.

No one can come in contact—into intimate communion —with the highest minds, which are among the highest manifestations we have of God Himself, without the study of the poets, which enlarges and liberalizes and humanizes the ideal a man forms for himself. Cruelty and literary culture seem exclusive terms, and the first blow struck for the slave was dealt by a literary man, pure and simple. When a fugitive slave ran into Garfield's camp, and an order was sent him by his superior officer, telling him to hunt up the negro and deliver him to his owner, Garfield wrote on the order that he positively declined to allow his command to search for or deliver up any fugitive slaves. His friends were alarmed, but the spirit of his generous conduct was afterwards embodied in a general order.

Garfield opposed the salary grab, but when it was forced on an appropriation bill by a decided vote, the appropriation bill being a measure in the fate of which he was deeply interested, he felt bound to acquiesce. This vote took his

constituents 'in the pit of the stomach.' Garfield went west to recapture the district, and did it, not by management for he was no manager, nor flattery, nor appeals to popular passions, but, as President Hinsdale testifies, by 'the earnest, straightforward exposition of solid doctrine;' by the high bearing of the man; by the 'impact of his mental and moral power upon intelligent and honest minds.' He stood by 'honest money,' and his speeches on this subject are models as popular expositions of financial principles. He never had a 'machine,' and his aspirations for the nation were struck in a key of high moral feeling. But he was a trained politician, and his career would exemplify the teaching of Mr. Longley, in his excellent paper on 'Politics considered as a Fine Art.' It may be added at a time when there are such misconceptions regarding Freemasonry abroad, that this good and noble man was a mason.

He was a true Christian politician—not using his Christianity as a means to cloak political infamy and catch pious but unperspicuous voters. Belonging to a sect in which the greatest simplicity prevails, and in which free utterance is allowed to all, he would preach to-day with the fervency of a Potts or a Rainsford, and to-morrow would, from the stump, advocate the cause of the Republican party. It need scarcely be said that though he struck hard blows he never hit below the belt, and never condescended to billingsgate or mendacity. And here, perhaps, we touch on the most potent key of those that called forth the threnody of universal sorrow—a sorrow which revealed a fund of feeling that only awaits the electric touch to wrap all nations in one flame of enthusiasm—issuing in some great united deed, compared with which the Crusades and even the great Reformation will seem small things. There is at present no preacher, no teacher to touch it; no new doctrine, no old dogma made fresh by human thought and feeling, to emit the enkindling

spark. But the fund of unselfish emotion is there. Evolution cannot touch it. I doubt if the tens of millions who sorrowed for Garfield, and the tens of thousands who subscribed to the Garfield fund, would have sorrowed and subscribed, if they were sufficiently advanced to believe that heaven and God are mere subjective illusions, that the anthropoid ape is our grandfather, and the marine ascidian the head of the house.

Nor perhaps if Garfield had been so scientific as to expunge God from the universe, would he have looked first, as he always did, for the approval of his conscience. The reason why ' the self-approving hour ' gives so much strength and peace, is that conscience proclaims the Great Contriver to be on our side, and all the forces of the universe therefore with us. In one of Garfield's speeches in the Ohio Senate, there is a passage which every young politician should learn by heart. It had been, he says, the plan of his life, to follow his convictions. He greatly desired the approbation of the district he represented in Congress, but he desired still more the approbation of one person, 'and his name was Garfield.' This was the only man he was compelled to sleep with, and eat with, and live with, and die with, and if he could not have had his approbation, he would have been in a bad way. This habit of mind is the only one which can keep a politician erect in the slippery paths of politics.

In his address, after nomination, he struck the key-note of Civil Service Reform. One of his first acts, however, was to carry out the doctrine of spoils. But here we must travel back a little.

The Roman historians and orators became transcendent liars the moment they spoke about their ancestors and the relations of their country with other nations. They were eloquent about Punic faith; it would be interesting to know what Carthage thought of Roman perfidy. The half educated

mediocrity to which pure democracies must always offer so wide a field, has nowhere had such scope as in the United States, and confident ignorance has never flaunted in such outrageous disregard of truth as in Fourth of July orations. The favourite rhetorical ruse, or flight of fancy, on those occasions is to picture the Fathers assembled in Council, Providence presiding, the Constitution emerging like some inspired result, and hailed with discriminating rapture by the American people. Anything more at variance with truth than this could not well be conceived. The Constitution was the outcome of wrangling and difficulty, and was wrung by necessity from an unwilling people. Indeed the doctrine of State sovereignty never bit the dust until the close of the bloodiest and most costly civil war on record. Everything is exaggerated in the United States, and the evils which always follow great wars, and those evils which are the peculiar heritage of civil wars, manifested themselves on an unprecedented scale. Though Grant took the first step in Civil Service Reform, he was, and is, a friend of the Spoils System. His disregard of republican simplicity, his willingness to compromise the independence of his great office by taking presents from all sides, the scandals and peculations brought home to some of his prominent supporters, his readiness to stand by them, even after their character took the complexion of infamy, forced on the minds of the best citizens the truth that all human institutions will have peculiar weaknesses characteristic of the structure, and marking the way in which they act on, and are influenced by, human passions. So wildly have poets and orators spoken of freedom that men have not unnaturally attributed to it the power of a true divinity, whose ark would wither the hands which touched it profanely, whereas liberty is only a mood of human society wholly impossible in certain stages of human development, and which cannot exist once the majority of a

people have grown corrupt. Nothing can therefore be more absurd than the optimist views expressed by certain writers in regard to the United States. Propositions affirming by implication the approach of a political millenium are introduced by such phrases as 'it is felt,' 'it must be,' 'the needs of the race require it,' and the like, and curiously enough are placed side by side with chronicles of corruption. But democracy, we are told, is not responsible for any of the evils in the Democracy, which are due to some external and malign power; as if every form of government was not an outgrowth of human conditions practically co-extensive with the people to which it may belong, though capable of acting back with plastic power on the conditions from which it emerged, with ever newly modified results. The mass of men can see no distinction which is not made tangible, and equality, therefore, while teaching them the priceless lessons of independence, after some time makes them consider the power of money-getting the one thing needful. There is no time for self-culture—culture is therefore meagre; and all men being equal, the greatest ambitions are, without shame, entertained by small capacities. Every man is his own standard; and the tendency is to resent intellectual eminence. There being but one or two great social and political forces, and no variety in the motives of conduct and ideals of life, men become as like each other as peas; real individuality fades, while individual aggressiveness becomes universal. There is more general comfort than under aristocratic conditions, and for the absence of great men there is a compensation in the shape of widely diffused material happiness. But though forests of steeples point to heaven, and no sun rises without glittering on ten thousand crosses, the tendency in such a society is to make a god of mammon.

The hope for popular institutions is in the intelligence of the people; their danger that the people, even though intel-

ligent, allow themselves, when not in the face of a menacing crisis or not stirred by some great excitement, to act on low motives. The proposition that a people is too intelligent to be robbed of freedom is one which must be qualified in every case. It is not rational to believe that men can constantly go near the brink of the cataract, yet always escape going over the falls. On the eve of the late election the danger was great, and an effort, almost superhuman, was made to fling off the system which had the Republic by the throat. But the powers of darkness, as represented by Conkling, Cameron and Logan, and their machines, were strong, and they bent all their resources to secure the prize for Grant. The Republican party in New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois wished to give what the French would call the imperative mandate to the delegates to the nominating Convention. The delegates are chosen by Congressional Districts, but at the State Conventions resolutions were passed pledging the States to vote each one as a unit for Grant. This was a good instance of how far the tyranny of organization, when divorced from broad views and statesmanlike capacity, will aspire to go, and shows how completely after a time it throws aside all respect for constitutional procedure; and what an enemy it is of deliberation, its constant aim being to make deliberative assemblies elaborate frauds. The first question raised in the convention was whether the delegates from Republican States should be bound by the resolutions of the State Conventions, or whether the district rule should prevail and the delegates vote as they thought best. Robertson, of New York, was the leader of the party which broke away from the daring usurpation of dictatorial power by the machines. The man he and his friends tried for was Blaine, Garfield himself being for Sherman, of Ohio. The opposition to Grant was shared between Blaine, Sherman, and Edmunds. Garfield, from the first, 'divided the honours' with Conkling, that is to say, he was received with demonstrations of respect

as enthusiastic as those which greeted the great wire-puller. His speech in favour of Sherman made a profound impression on the Convention, and when vote after vote was taken and no progress made, and the followers of no one of the Republican opponents of Grant would give way to those of the other, and three hundred standing each time solid by Grant, a cry rose spontaneously: 'would it were Garfield!' and the flags of the various States moved up amid loud cheers round what then became the banner from Ohio.

The Constitution is framed on the principle that the people may be trusted to do what is really best for themselves—that is, what is best for the nation at large. But this principle, as we have seen, takes for granted a great deal for which unfortunately there is no foundation in fact. The individuals who compose a people may be trusted to do what seems to each one the best for himself. A few take the course marked out by wisdom and duty; but many generations will have passed away before men generally rise to the height—if they ever will—of looking at what is best for themselves, individually, in a manner which would make that glance coincident with what is best for the nation. The instant the fear of oppression is over, egotism is allowed full play, and when a man cannot get an important position for himself, he wants it for his cousin; and when he cannot get it for his cousin, he wants it for his fellow-townsman; when his fellow-townsmen are out of the question, he wants it for some one in his section of the country. The Constitution decrees that the President and Vice-President shall be elected at the same time and by the same body, and that should the President for any cause be no longer able to discharge the duties of President, these shall devolve on the Vice-President. In, therefore, electing a Vice-President, a possible President is chosen. But this contingency being remote, is never allowed any influence; and the candidate for President once fixed on, the candidate for Vice-President

is chosen with the view of throwing a sop to sectional jealousy. Accordingly, Garfield being from the west, Arthur was chosen from the east, and also because he was a follower of Conkling. The necessity of propitiating Conkling, the price paid, furnishes a measure of his power. The Stalwarts were beaten, but they might fairly hope to have considerable influence; and Conkling evidently expected to be allowed to rule in New York.

How did Garfield act? He was daring but not consistent. He appears as the champion of Civil Service Reform, but the act which probably led to his death, was one which carried out to its utmost length the democratic doctrine, that he had himself denounced: 'to the victors belong the spoils.' The officer he removed from the collectorship at the port of New York was a Republican and a Civil Service reformer. He did not belong to either the section which opposed or supported Garfield, who was, therefore, displacing not a member of an opposing party, but a bureaucratist who was in favour of Civil Service Reform, and in all points fit for the position, in order to place there a supporter of his own. Conkling is no friend to Civil Service Reform. What then was Garfield's offence? He made an appointment in New York State without consulting the Duke of New York—as Conkling is sometimes called—the person appointed, moreover, as the leader of those who broke away from the unit scheme, being personally offensive to the bold machinator

What occurred, instead of affording a text for a sermon against party, illustrated in reality the confusion following on a disregard of the duties which arise from party relations. In fact, Garfield, Conkling and Guiteau were all bad party men. Had the unhappy assassin been a good party man he would have crushed down his personal predilections and acquiesced in the decision of the Republican party. His act was the extreme expression of faction, all the conditions of

which were fulfilled by Grant and his junto; faction being distinguished from party by this: that one pursues its ends on personal, the other on public grounds; the aim of the former is individual aggrandizement, of the latter the welfare of the country.

Unfortunately, the President of the United States remains the leader of a party. If he is not the leader before election he is at once elevated to that position. The relation between leader and follower implies reciprocal duties. Conkling belongs to that dangerous type of politician who gains power, not by learning or wisdom, not by statesmanship or greatness in any walk, but solely by reason of cunning and a capacity for organization. He is a manager, a boss, a runner of the machine—that is all. His claims to greatness rest largely on his control of party organization. Now party organization is a good thing. In fact without party organization efficient government in democratic communities would be impossible. But good things may be abused; a gun is a good thing, but in the hands of a robber on a lonely road all that gives it value only makes it the better ally of crime; and party organization when grasped by bad men of narrow ideas and ungenerous aspirations becomes a silent, stealthy garrotter of opinion, a means whereby designing knaves may slay freedom under the dome of her chosen sanctuary. Conkling proved himself a bad, unpatriotic man. Nor had he, according to some, great provocation; for it is contended that the collectorship at the port of New York, at which most of the customs duties for the entire country are collected, is a national office, the appointment to which should not be confined by State lines. But even taking the strongest view of its local character that could be taken, still the true course, from our point of view of allegiance to party, was to submit, and wait for redress from time, and from the sense of justice in the entire party, all whose

interests and instincts are opposed to endorsing snubbing a man of sterling services. This is the course which prudence, which proper pride, which party honour, which patriotism, all suggested. Because it is not possible that the principles of a party can be carried out if everybody who has, or who thinks he has, a personal grievance, begins to kick and bolt, and a proud man will make it clear that he has not joined a party for personal ends. It is barely possible to conceive a case where self-respect and party allegiance clash. Now the claims of self-respect are paramount. If a man's self-respect will no longer permit him to follow the leader, his duty, as self-respect itself will suggest, is, temporarily or finally, to retire from politics, not to go over to the other side or to seek to create mutiny in the camp If a man gives a leader support, it ought not to be like the purring of a cat, endowed with no longer existence than while he is rubbed the right way ; it should be a consistent and generous support, which bad treatment even could not impair, always understanding that the bad treatment is not of a character the endurance of which is inconsistent with self-respect. This is the only dignified course—this the only course which will save a party man from demoralization. Praising your leader to-day because he has done something you admire, abusing him to-morrow because he has thought fit not to take you into his confidence, is a process of rapid moral decline. It is fatal to success. A squealer is not only weak, but his squealing proclaims his weakness, and in no sphere are the words of Milton so true as in politics —'to be weak is miserable.' A politician who is worth anything to the country will be well content if the principles he has advocated are being carried out ; if he is to be worth much to his party, he ought to be able to put a bearing-rein on his indignation, even when he has cause to be angry. A mutinous party man developes a habit of requiring to be soothed by his leader until he becomes at once as weak and

as annoying as a spoiled, querulous child. If he was ever resolute he becomes irresolute, and all the motions of his mind have the flabbiness of a broken will; each morning hears him swear he will fire the camp, but night inevitably falls without his striking a match. He makes it palpable to the world that egotism, not principle, is the guide of his actions, and becomes an object of as much moral interest as a hangman who, having fallen out with his employers, proceeds to avenge himself by joining the Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment; on his lips a jibe at the sheriff, his hands twitching for a job.

But though this strong view of party allegiance is the true view, it is impossible to acquit President Garfield of all blame. The principles by which a man who has attained supreme power should be guided in making appointments are clear. 1st. He should appoint the most efficient men. 2nd. When there are two or more men equally efficient, he should appoint that one who has given most help to himself in attaining to supreme power. No one has a right to aspire to any position, still less to the first position in a State, unless he thinks himself the candidate likely to prove most useful to the people. It is assumed that the reason a good and wise man wishes to have himself elected for any trust, is because of his opinions and principles, and his views as to carrying them out. In proportion as his convictions are strong, in the same proportion he must feel that the persons who have helped him to power have to the measure of their capacity served the State. Now the State is not exempt any more than an individual, from the law of gratitude. If the person supporting you, and securing your success, is opposed to you personally, but, nevertheless, gives you assistance rather then see his party—that is a certain body of principles of government—beaten, he really deserves better of his country than if his sentiments towards you personally were friendly.

In the late presidential election it would have been a most disastrous thing had power passed into the hands of the Democratic party. That party is not yet fit to have the destinies of the country placed in its grasp. Had Mr. Conkling, baffled in fixing on Grant, showed in the Convention anything like the bull-in-a-china-shop spirit he showed afterwards, he could have prevented Garfield's election. Therefore, some consideration was due to him; and it should have been made perfectly clear that, when the Senator from New York was not consulted, only the interests of the country, apart from any shade of personal feeling, were considered.

Now Robertson undoubtedly did Garfield great service, and, therefore, on the principle laid down, great service to the State. But Conkling had also done him great service. Let it be granted, for argument's sake, that the services of Robertson outweighed Conkling's. The appointment, on which the gage of battle was thrown down, was the collectorship at the port of New York. The occupant, Mr. Merritt, was a member of the Republican party. He was a Civil Service reformer. The public service had grown more efficient under his hand. He had been appointed by President Hayes, in spite of the opposition of Mr. Conkling, whose nominee Mr. Arthur was. In 1879, he bore emphatic testimony to the benefit resulting from admissions to the service by examination and removals only for cause.

Now, if Garfield was prepared to ignore the claims of Conkling, it is clear he ought to have left Merritt where he was. This would have shown the world that he was acting solely in the interest of Civil Service Reform, and that if he was shutting down on Conkling's predilections, if predilections he had, he had previously shut down on his own. This course if it did not conciliate Conkling would have deprived him of all moral support among the best

spirits in the Stalwart ranks; it would have soothed the worst and it would have challenged universal admiration. It is true the blue ribbon of the spoils would not have fallen to Robertson, who had done great services. But in this case a higher interest of the State was opposed to a lower. Merritt being efficient—a Republican—the embodiment of Civil Service Reform—leaving him in his post was the very strongest step which could be taken in favour of the new and better departure. The appointment of Robertson, who was equally honest, no doubt, only carried out one good principle—that of rewarding those who have served the State. The same principle, and others equally valuable, would have been honoured by keeping Merritt where he was.

If the Spoils System was to be acted on, then the just and wise course was to come to some understanding with Conkling, and it is easy to conceive as possible—though the cogency of the present reasoning does not depend on this—such an understanding as would have induced Conkling to have enrolled himself on Garfield's side. In politics, as in all other fields of action, we may be sure the best thing is to make complete justice—no maimed or partial divinity—our guide. A politician, moreover, by his very profession, is bound to be politic, and in aiming at any great change, he will seek to offend as few susceptibilities as possible. How, had Garfield not fallen by the hand of an assassin, he would have gone forward, it is not possible to doubt. He would probably, after two terms, have left the White House, having brought the Civil Service to a condition by which corruption was fenced off, and the maximum of efficiency secured. He would have thrown the weight of his character and office on the side of temperance, would have given an example of republican simplicity, and in the most emphatic way—namely, by his acts—marked his disapproval of any

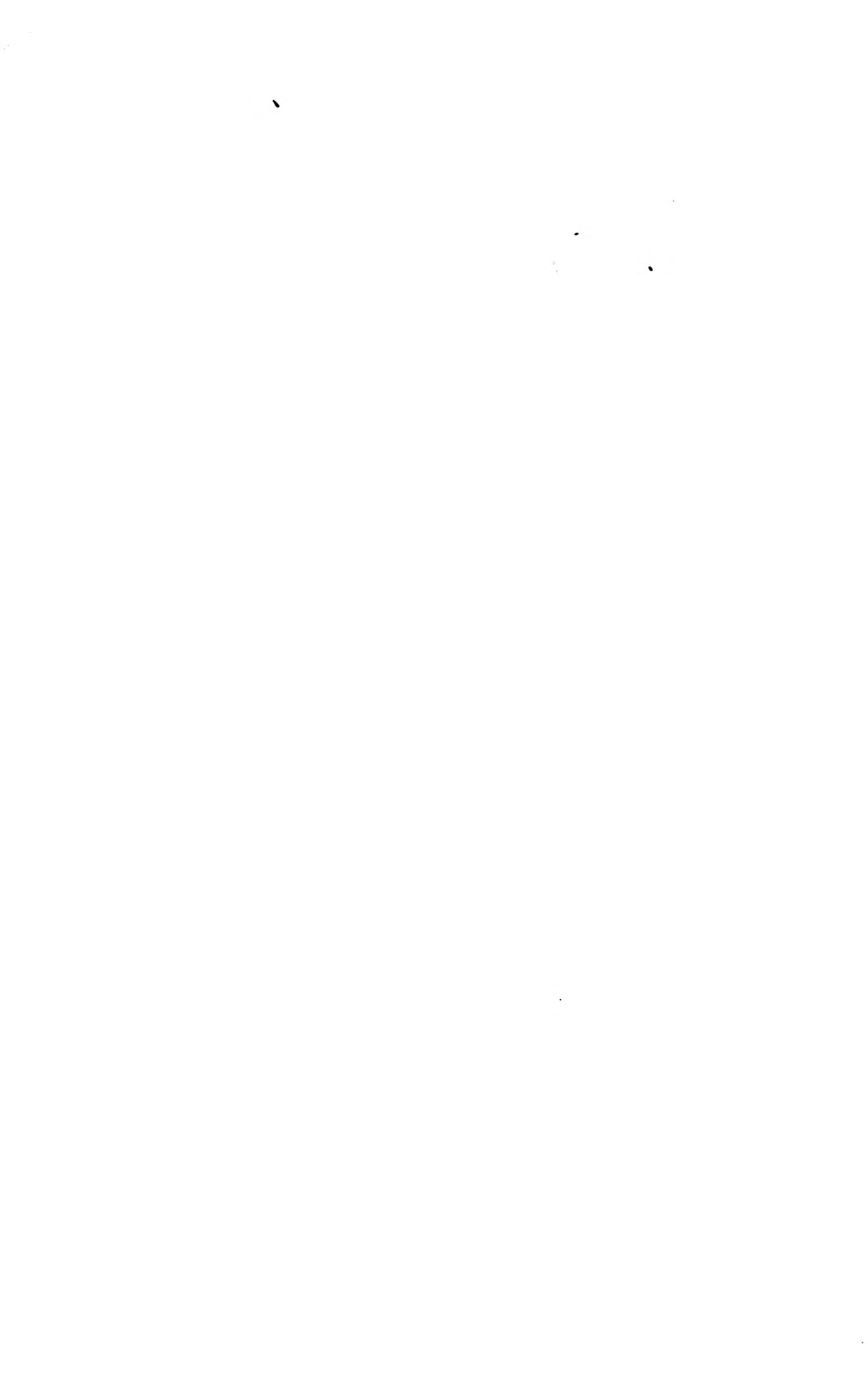
officer, above all the head of the State, taking bribes under the name of presents. His whole political conduct betrays the refinement which scholarship imparts to character, and the dignity which is given to a politician by having open to him more than one field of achievement, and such a man would not have surrounded himself with gamblers and trotting masters, but with those who prove, by their deeds, that they think the cultivation of the mind the noblest work in which energy can be consumed; the anecdotes which would have emerged from the Presidential circle would not have had reference to 'draw poker' and cigars and blood horses; his children would have been saved, by his culture and good sense, from behaving with indecent social aggressiveness; while Mrs. Garfield's influence would have been against the reign of social queens, whose idea of good *ton* is extravagance, and in whose sight character counts for nothing and costly drapery is all. We can follow him into dignified retirement, which his literary attainments and gifts would have redeemed from obscurity; gifts and attainments which would have saved him from hankering after such political activity as is incongruous and injurious for an ex-President, and would have enabled him to rest his claims to recognition and reverence on supports not wholly drawn from the past. He had the faculty of growth, and it is morally certain his mind had not registered the highest water-mark of its possible development; and in order to realize what the United States may have lost by his death, we must think what a different estimate the world would have formed of Beaconsfield, of Thiers, of Palmerston, of Chaucer, of Gladstone, had they died at fifty years of age. He might, like some of these men, have done his greatest works after his shoulders had bowed to the first touch of old age, and, like others of them, have raised a standard by which politicians and statesmen could test themselves and be tested by others. In any case he would have left behind him a

reputation which a generous ambition would covet above all others, that of a man who had arrested his country in a downward career, and called from latency into vigorous action moral forces that paralyzed principles which were striking at her life, and under whose blows she had begun to totter to her fall.

No doubt it is easier to picture such a career on paper than to have made it a fact. That he was hardly sufficiently alive to the need in which a great ruler of men stands of compromise, not with principle—never for one moment with principle—but in details of administration, is evident; and it is equally clear that as sure as the waves which beat themselves white against the cliffs are composed of the same chemical elements as the great mass of less angry sea which presses from behind, the pitiful assassin, in his sense of injustice and resentment, though not in his mode of expressing these, was representative of hundreds, amongst whom are remarkable and powerful men. Forces, the magnitude of which at this hour it is not easy to measure, would have had to be coped with and crushed. It is not permitted to doubt that crushed they would have been, because but a small portion of the people is interested in corruption, and corruption can flourish only while the people are listless or sleep in security, and there was abundant evidence that the people were not only awake, but active in the cause of reform. Still heroic footsteps sometimes falter on the ridge of power, and it may be that Garfield's sufferings and death have done more for his country than would have been accomplished by two terms of his rule. His tragic end stimulated the reflection and awakened the conscience of the people, and woe to them if they do not act on the good resolves made in the hour of national affliction and bereavement. President Arthur evidently means to do well. Arthur, the follower of Conkling, and Arthur, the President of the United States,

are two very different individuals in their liberty and opportunities. It is the curse of such political organization as exists in New York, that a man of spirit cannot give his services to his country without being brought in contact with some unholy machinery. But the President is free—not from a sense of obligation to Mr. Conkling—he would be a bad man did he not cherish gratitude to the great wire-puller—but free to break away from Conkling's traditions, perhaps his trammels, and to place himself at the head of the upward and better movement of which his predecessor was the embodiment. It would be unjust to the President to say he played the part of Saul to the Stephen of political purity; but, without impropriety, he may be urged to prove himself the Paul of the cause, to which at the time he was certainly no friend, and for which Garfield fell a proto-martyr. Should he fail, he will be remembered in history as the dark foil of the pure spirit whose inspiration he could not catch, as a man at whose feet chance placed the opportunities of a world, but who proved himself only fit to be a minor wheel in a provincial donkey-engine. Whether he fails or succeeds, the responsibility of the people remains. There is a warning for them, not merely in Guiteau's guilt, but in the violence and guilt of presumptious scoundrels, some of whom wore the uniform of the country, who would have taken the unhappy murderer out of the arbitrament of law. In those eager passions, in that desire to take justice into private hands, in the readiness to resort to a pistol in a row, and to mendacious scandal in argument, there is peril. But the power is with the people and, therefore, the remedy, if they have the moral and intellectual qualities to apply it. They need to be reminded, as do their eulogists in England, who, we may be sure, were, a few years ago, among their most irrational and cynical critics, that the vast unoccupied country to the west has hitherto prevented the Republic being subjected to the strain which will come when it is thickly peopled; that history

and revelation would both suggest a law of ethnic sub-division; that up to the present the peoples who have shown the greatest mastery of the art of government have been those whose characters were formed, not under the influence of one or two great principles, but of many. Let monuments and statues rise to Garfield, but let his countrymen beware lest they swell the category of those who build the tombs of prophets whose teaching they ignore or outrage. The true monument to Garfield will be the inauguration of a new era both as regards methods and men. On the day of the solemn services at Washington, amid dark scarf and drooping banner, a rainbow appeared. Like that bow of promise, sentiments, regrets, hopes, resolves, aspirations, sorrow, during the weeks immediately succeeding his death, spanned the Republic, giving to it a strange, tender grandeur, and genuine moral beauty. It is to the spiritual forces thus indicated we must look to stay and strengthen the confidence that corruption will not be allowed to overwhelm the achievements of the past and all the hopes which look for fruition to the future.



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